

Remarks

Prior to this amendment, claims 8-15 were pending. With entry of this amendment, claims 8, 9, 10 and 15 have been amended, claims 11, 12, 13 and 14 are cancelled, and claims 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 have been added.

The Rejection of claims 8 -15 under 37 USC §102 (b).

Claims 8-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b), as allegedly anticipated by Allen (U.S. Patent No.: 3,817,111). The Office Action states that “Allen shows a screw (180) and nut (160) device (figure 10) where the nut can be released from the screw (position of figure 10) which allows the nut to travel along the screw for coarse positioning and then the nut is re-engaged to provide for fine positioning of the device” (Office Action, page 2).

Allen recites a mechanism consisting of a pair of threaded levers and a bar member with an oblong cross-section. The rotation of this bar member connects and disconnects the threads of the levers and the thread of the adjusting rod. It is the frictional action of this bar member over the levers that maintains the threads of the adjusting rod and levers connected while the device is positioned by the rotation of the adjusting rod. The device of the present claims does not contain these elements or function in a manner as claimed by Allen. Specifically, in the device of the present claims, it is the action of a compression spring exerting a radial preload on a single pivotable nut that maintains the threads of the nut and threaded rod connected, as oppose to the frictional action of the bar member with oblong cross-section on the two threaded levers, as recited by Allen. Furthermore, this radial preload on the pivotable nut, as recited in the present claims, ensures that there is no mechanical play between the thread of the nut and the thread of threaded rod when these threads are connected. In the mechanism recited in the claims by Allen, there is not explicit provision to control radial and axial mechanical play and therefore, eliminate backlash, beyond the implicit frictional action of the bar member with oblong cross-section on the two threaded levers.

In the present claims, the pivoting motion of the nut, when the radial preload is overcome, disconnects the threads of the nut and the threads of the threaded rod. Whereas, in Allen's mechanism, it is the rotation of the bar member with oblong cross-section that disconnects the threads of the levers and adjusting rod, since a compression spring is constantly biasing the threaded levers away from the adjusting rod.

Given that claims 8, 9, 10 and 15 have been amended, claims 11, 12, 13 and 14 have been cancelled, and new claims 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20 have been introduced; Applicant's claims, as presented, are not anticipated by Allen.

Withdrawal of the rejection under 37 USC §102 (b) is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: August 11, 2007

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